

XII. PRIMARY DATA FINDINGS

1. ADULT BEHAVIOR RISK FACTOR SURVEY

The Adult Behavior Risk Factor Survey was conducted during the Fall of 1995. As reported earlier, one adult, age 18 or older, from each of 816 randomly selected households, was surveyed in Hamilton County. The findings as noted by the Metropolitan Council for Community Services, in their publication entitled “A Report on Community Health,” pointed to a number of health indicators and risk factors which were of great concern. Because of their impact, five of these findings are presented below. See Appendix 2-1 for complete summary of survey results.

- It was reported that 24 percent of respondents smoked. The Year 2000 Objectives for the Nation, with benchmarks set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, established the target of 15 percent (or below) of our U.S. population to be engaged in smoking by the year 2000.

Research has confirmed that cigarette smoking is an important risk factor for heart disease, stroke, chronic lung disease, and cancers of the lung, larynx, esophagus, pharynx, mouth, pancreas and bladder. Despite a reduction nationally and locally,

smoking is still responsible for one of every six deaths in the United States. In Hamilton County, cigarette smoking is a contributing factor for a vast number of ranking illnesses among adults, including heart disease (23,455 cases), asthma (15,777 cases), chronic bronchitis (15,676 cases), emphysema (2,121 cases), and high blood pressure (34,164 cases). Note: These case figures have been extrapolated for Hamilton County from the 1995 National Household Survey, for All Ages, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

We may conclude that tobacco-related illnesses have contributed to many of the leading causes of death for residents of Hamilton County, including diseases of the heart, most cancers, cerebrovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and atherosclerosis.

- The survey results also pointed out that 30 percent of respondents reported that they were at least 20 percent over the median recommended weight for their body frame, height and age.

Paralleling national trends, overweight and obesity affect a large proportion of Hamilton County adults. Weight management is generally difficult for most people to maintain. Even once such targets are realized, most adults find it extremely difficult and unrealistic to manage and sustain the target, (often because of lifestyle, eating habits, stress, work patterns, and various medical factors).